

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image displaying method of displaying plural image frames on a display panel, wherein image data of said image frames are stored in a data storage with 5 chronological information, said image displaying method comprising steps of:

A. obtaining a chronological interval between said image frames according to said chronological information;

10 B. grouping said plural image frames into plural image groups according to a length of said chronological interval;

15 C. determining a principal image frame of each of said image groups and one or more intra-group image frames which are included in each of said image groups but different from said principal image frame;

D. displaying a plurality of said principal image frame on said display panel in a state arranged along a first line;

20 E. specifying one of said plural principal image frames, to determine a specified principal image frame;

25 F. displaying at least one intra-group image frame on said display panel in a state arranged along a second line different from said first line, said at least one intra-group image frame being included in an image group of said specified principal image frame.

2. An image displaying method as defined in claim 1, wherein said second line intersects with said first line at said specified principal image frame.

30 3. An image displaying method as defined in claim 2, further comprising steps of:

G. reading said chronological information from said data storage;

H. after said step C, reading said image data of said principal image frames from said data storage;

5 I. after said step D, reading said image data of said intra-group image frames from said data storage.

4. An image displaying method as defined in claim 3, wherein if said step E occurs during said step I, said image data of said intra-group image frames included in 10 said image group having said specified principal image frame are read with priority from said data storage.

5. An image displaying method as defined in claim 4, wherein in said step I, said image data of said intra-group image frames are read in a sequence determined by said 15 chronological information.

6. An image displaying method as defined in claim 4, wherein in said step I, said image data of said intra-group image frames are read for one image frame per one image group and also in an sequence of said image groups.

20 7. An image displaying method as defined in claim 3, further comprising a step of displaying frame amount information on said display panel in association with said principal image frames, said frame amount information representing an amount of said intra-group image frames 25 included in respectively said image groups.

8. An image displaying method as defined in claim 7, wherein said frame amount information has a form of at least one sub-frame, and is disposed to overlap on said principal image frames in said display panel, and a number 30 of said at least one sub-frame is substantially

proportional to said amount of said intra-group image frames included in an associated one of said image groups.

9. An image displaying method as defined in claim 3, further comprising a step of displaying information of a 5 chronological zone of said image frames derived from said image groups on said display panel near to respectively said principal image frames.

10. An image displaying method as defined in claim 2, wherein said second line is substantially perpendicular to 10 said first line.

11. An image displaying method as defined in claim 3, further comprising steps of:

L. determining said principal image frame for one of said image groups of which reading of said image data of 15 said intra-group image frames is completed;

M. displaying said principal image frame on said display panel in a renewed manner according to a result of said step L.

12. An image displaying method as defined in claim 20 11, wherein said steps L and M are executed periodically at a regular period.

13. An image displaying method as defined in claim 11, wherein said principal image frame determined in said step L is a frame of a human image.

25 14. An image displaying method as defined in claim 3, further comprising:

combining a plurality of said intra-group image frames for one of said image groups of which reading of said image data of said intra-group image frames is completed, to 30 produce a combined image frame;

displaying said combined image frame on said display panel in a renewed manner for said principal image frame.

15. An image displaying method as defined in claim 1, wherein said data storage further stores an index file for 5 associating said image frames with said chronological information;

further comprising steps of:

before said step A, reading said index file;

if said chronological interval between two of said 10 image frames is smaller than a predetermined value, determining that said two image frames are included in a common one of said image groups;

if said chronological interval between said two image frames is equal to or greater than said predetermined 15 value, determining that said two image frames are included in two distinct image groups of said image groups.

16. An image displaying method as defined in claim 1, wherein a combination of said image data and said chronological information constitutes a data file;

20 further comprising steps of:

before said step A, reading said chronological information from said data file;

producing an index file for associating said image frames with said chronological information;

25 if said chronological interval between two of said image frames is smaller than a predetermined value, determining that said two image frames are included in a common one of said image groups;

if said chronological interval between said two image 30 frames is equal to or greater than said predetermined

value, determining that said two image frames are included in two distinct image groups of said image groups.

17. An image displaying method as defined in claim 1, further comprising steps of:

5 displaying an indicator on said display panel for selectively pointing said image frames;

moving said indicator on said first line, in order to specify said principal image frames on said display panel.

18. An image displaying method as defined in claim 10 17, further comprising a step of moving said indicator on said second line, in order to specify one of said intra-group image frames included in said image group having said specified principal image frame.

19. An image displaying method as defined in claim 15 17, further comprising a step of displaying said intra-group image frames included in said image group having said specified principal image frame in a shiftable manner on said second line.

20. An order receiving device for displaying plural image frames on a display panel, and for receiving an order according to selection of said image frames to be reproduced, wherein image data of said image frames are stored in a data storage with chronological information, said order receiving device comprising:

25 a transferring unit for reading said image data and said chronological information from said data storage;

a chronology analyzer for obtaining a chronological interval between said image frames according to said chronological information, for grouping said plural image 30 frames into plural image groups according to a length of said chronological interval, and for determining a

principal image frame of each of said image groups and one or more intra-group image frames which are included in each of said image groups but different from said principal image frame;

5 a controller for driving said display panel to display a plurality of said principal image frame in a state arranged along a first line;

10 a selector for specifying one of said plural principal image frames, to determine a specified principal image frame;

15 wherein said controller drives said display panel to display at least one intra-group image frame in a state arranged along a second line different from said first line, said at least one intra-group image frame being included in an image group of said specified principal image frame.

21. An order receiving device as defined in claim 20, wherein said second line intersects with said first line at said specified principal image frame.

20 22. An order receiving device as defined in claim 21, wherein said transferring unit reads said image data of said principal image frames from said data storage, and upon displaying said principal image frames on said display panel, reads said image data of said intra-group image frames from said data storage.

30 23. An order receiving device as defined in claim 22, wherein upon specifying one of said principal image frames while said image data of said intra-group image frames are read, said image data of said intra-group image frames included in said image group having said specified principal image frame are read with priority from said data storage.

24. A system adapted to receiving an order, comprising:

a pickup device for producing image data of image frames by pickup thereof, to write chronological information and said image data to a data storage; and

an order receiving device for displaying plural image frames on a display panel, and for receiving said order according to selection of said image frames to be reproduced, said order receiving device including:

10 a transferring unit for reading said image data and said chronological information from said data storage;

a chronology analyzer for obtaining a chronological interval between said image frames according to said chronological information, for grouping said plural image frames into plural image groups according to a length of said chronological interval, and for determining a principal image frame of each of said image groups and one or more intra-group image frames which are included in each of said image groups but different from said principal image frame;

a controller for driving said display panel to display a plurality of said principal image frame in a state arranged along a first line;

25 a selector for specifying one of said plural principal image frames, to determine a specified principal image frame;

wherein said controller drives said display panel to display at least one intra-group image frame in a state arranged along a second line different from said first line, said at least one intra-group image frame being

included in an image group of said specified principal image frame.

25. A system as defined in claim 24, wherein said second line intersects with said first line at said 5 specified principal image frame.

26. A system as defined in claim 25, wherein said transferring unit reads said image data of said principal image frames from said data storage, and upon displaying said principal image frames on said display panel, reads 10 said image data of said intra-group image frames from said data storage.

27. A system as defined in claim 26, wherein upon specifying one of said principal image frames while said image data of said intra-group image frames are read, said 15 image data of said intra-group image frames included in said image group having said specified principal image frame are read with priority from said data storage.